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April 17, 1961

Dear John:

Knowing that my telephone conversation with you this morning must have taken place in the midst of your efforts to catch up after a hectic trip, I thought it might be best if I sent you a short note summarizing the salient points we covered.

I noted for you that [] of Convair, Ft. Worth, called the other day to inquire into our availability to support Convair in the performance of research and development relating to missiles and other vehicles. More specifically, he would want us to perform for Convair the same type of working services we are performing under contract for you, and particularly such research and development as would apply to vehicles Convair would propose to build for the Air Force. [] plans to discuss his proposal with General Shriver within the next day or so. I do not believe that Convair has in mind, at this time, the establishment of a facility to carry out the type of measurements and research in which we are now engaged but rather would like to incorporate the advanced state-of-the-art we are studying in vehicle designs.

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As a consequence, it appears to us that this might be an opportunity to arrive at an arrangement with the Air Force under which research and development in the specific field covered in our Contract could be performed for the Air Force through your organization and utilize facilities controlled by you. We are certain that we can bring new personnel into the project on an appropriate time scale to meet the suitable terms of such additional work. Furthermore, it would appear that the performance of such additional work would make possible a reduction of cost impact on your project. Our conversations with Mr. Widner were purely exploratory and, for the most part, an attempt by us to obtain some understanding of what he had in mind. In furtherance of this objective, we have agreed to meet with him in Las Vegas probably sometime during the week of April 24.

The second point we touched upon in my conversation with you was the hope for announcements relating to []. As I understand the situation at present, a meeting will be held tomorrow in which a decision will be reached on how and when the announcement will be made. In view of the presence in Las Vegas and at the site of [] personnel, we continue to be concerned over the situation and hope that agreement will be reached to make the announcement at the earliest possible date so that [] position can be both clarified and stabilized.

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Finally, I noted for you that our work in recent weeks has brought us to the point that we feel that precise knowledge of the contours of K.J.'s design is essential so that we can apply our type of measures within that contour. Our work with the scale model on hand has reached the point where we feel that, as far as the total forward part of the model is concerned, we have been able to achieve a/light weight application which takes us only three units above goal at all four levels involved and more important we have been able to limit the angular width to approximately five degrees. Thus, it would appear that we have now learned how to correct this source of difficulty to perhaps ten units better than we were able to do before.

We are now going on to add the back part of the model and try out some new ideas on the trouble spots involved there. I should add that we have now set up equipment which will permit us to test the characteristics of the materials actively employed in the embodiments on which range measurements are made. Thus, we are now in a position to double check in situations where material differences appear to be contributing to anomalous results. Along these lines, we hope to forward to you within the next week or ten days a report summarizing our activities for the period October 16, 1960 to April 15, 1961.

I trust you will find the above helpful.

Sincerely yours,

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